

AUSTIN GARDEN COLLECTIVE

HELP US HIRE A FARM EDUCATOR

If we can raise \$30,000 in 2026, we can hire a Farm Educator in March 2027 to train and mentor six young adults from the West Side of Chicago in urban agriculture. This 6-month training module will be phase one in our programming to support an Incubator Farm in the Austin community.



About Our Farm

The Austin Garden Collective supports and provides resources for 25+ Community Gardens and Farms in the Austin neighborhood of Chicago. We are partnering with NeighborSpace to create a community farm on the westside of Chicago in the 37th Ward. Centered in the Austin community, the farm will provide incubator land for advanced growers to start their small businesses, provide healthy produce to the west side of Chicago, and space to train and mentor youth and young adults in urban agriculture.

A new
20,000-sf
farm on the
west side
of Chicago



57.4%

of Austin Residents
do not have easy access
to Fruits and Vegetables



31.7%

of Austin Residents report
Low Food Access

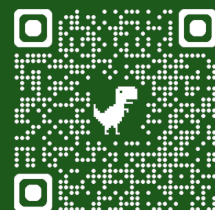


\$53,210

Median Household Income
in Austin, compared with
\$77,902 overall in Chicago



visit | austingardencollective.org
contact | farm@austingardencollective.org
give | austingardencollective.org/donate



AUSTIN GARDEN COLLECTIVE

The Need

Learning how to grow food is just the beginning. For many emerging growers, the next challenge is finding opportunities to put those skills into practice, learn alongside experienced growers, and access the continued support needed to move forward. Across Chicago, organizations have invested in agricultural education, yet the transition from learning to growing independently remains a challenge. Access to land, infrastructure, mentorship, markets, and ongoing technical support can determine whether emerging growers are able to turn their knowledge into lasting opportunities.

Our Approach

Austin Garden Collective is working to bridge that gap by building on the knowledge, relationships, and agricultural resources already present in our communities. Rather than creating another introductory training program, we're developing a connected pathway that supports emerging growers while strengthening a broader network of Austin-based growers. As AGC advances the development of two larger agricultural sites, we are establishing a first-year cohort experience through a partnership with an experienced local grower. This approach allows us to begin supporting growers using existing resources and infrastructure while laying the groundwork for future expansion.

The Investment: A Dedicated Farm Educator

The Farm Educator will provide the consistent leadership needed to turn this partnership into a meaningful experience for emerging growers. Working within the host grower's established crop plans, growing practices, and operational systems, the educator will guide participants through hands-on agricultural activities, food safety practices, harvesting, and preparation of produce for local markets. The host grower provides expertise and mentorship, while the educator leads the cohort's day-to-day learning and development. The educator will also help identify challenges that can prevent growers from continuing their work and connect them with AGC's network of agricultural partners, technical resources, and community relationships.

The Impact

Supporting this position is an investment in more than one cohort or growing season. It allows AGC to begin developing a connected system of grower support while preparing for expanded opportunities at its future sites. Our goal is to strengthen the skills, confidence, and connections of emerging growers, support the long-term viability of local agriculture, and contribute to a food system where Austin residents have greater access to fresh, locally grown food and growers have meaningful opportunities to build sustainable livelihoods. We've invested in teaching people how to grow food. Now it's time to invest in helping them keep growing.



visit | austingardencollective.org
contact | farm@austingardencollective.org
give | austingardencollective.org/donate

